Farm and Garden

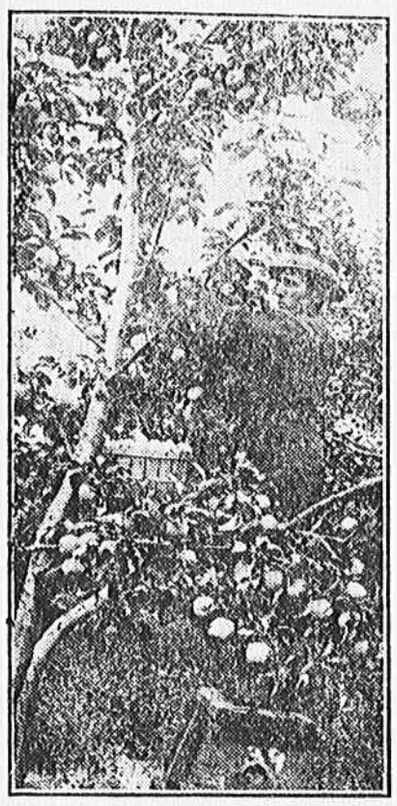
THINNING APPLES.

Secures Uniform Fruit and May Do Away With Worms.

[Prepared by Idaho station.]

It is the desire of every fruit grower to produce apples of good size, high color, fine quality and uniformity This is almost impossible without thinning. No orchardist will thin his fruit so as to obtan an abnormally large product, for the market does not demand such fruit. But it is necessary, with a big crop, to thin to a point where the most desirable size for the variety can be obtained.

One of the strongest arguments in favor of thinning is that it secures uniform fruit. Another point in its favor is that in thinning one may do away with a good many worms or



THINNING APPLES.

scabby apples. If apples are allowed to grow touching one another they form an ideal point of entry for the larvae of coddling moths.

Thinning also has its direct effect upon the tree. It allows it to make the proper wood growth, prevents breaking of limbs and allows the tree to produce as nearly as possible uniform annual crops. A heavy crop usually follows a light one. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the tree was allowed to overproduce the previous season.

The earlier the thinning can be done the better for the fruit remaining on the tree. No exact date can be set for this work.

The amount of fruit that should be left on a tree is an exceedingly hard thing to judge, and experience is the best teacher. Some try to thin to a certain number of boxes; others try to space their fruit. If spacing is followed the apples should not be left closer than five or six inches apart, and no apples should be left on the trees that touch each other. Thinning may be done by pinching the apple off by the fingers, but the work may be done quite handily by a pair of thinning shears.

Corn Suckers.

Many farmers are possessed with the idea that the suckers or earless stalks which grow from an ear bearing stalk of corn are a hindrance to the best growth of the latter, and valuable hours are sometimes spent in removing them. But, according to Wallace's Farmer, actual experiments during two successive years on Nebraska farms demonstrated that corn with the suckers left undisturbed outyielded that from which the suckers had been removed. Their leaves, like the others, would seem to perform a useful office in absorbing nutritive elements from the atmosphere for the benefit of the ear on the main stalk.

SOFT SHELLED EGGS.

The frequent laying of soft shelled eggs occasions a considerable market loss to the poultryman each year.

The first cause of soft shelled eggs is that the bird is too fat. Instead of the egg being controlled by firm muscles it merely slips through a flabby mass without getting its shell on. Birds should be made to scratch hard in a clean dry straw litter for grain, and the ration should not be overfattening.

The second cause is lack of lime in the hen's ration. Clam, oyster, beach shell and grit help supply this.

The third cause is the forcing of hens for too frequent egg production. A second yolk breaks off from the ovary and drops into the oviduct, and the first one is forced too rapidly on its way for it to be completely formed when laid.

Another cause comes from scouring, brought about by a loosening ration to the hens. The ration should be properly regulated. Home and Farm.

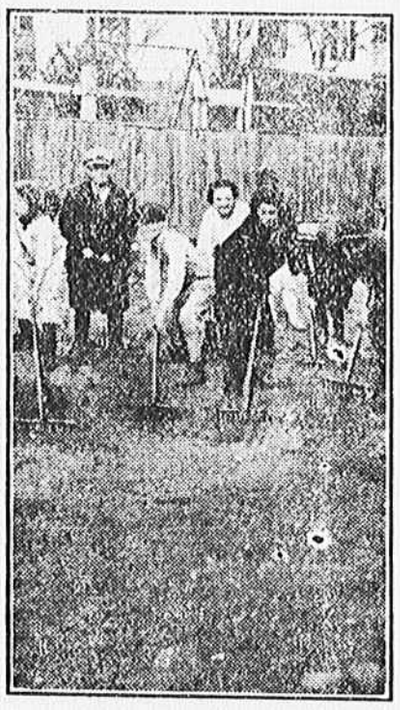
HOUSING CONDITIONS.

If the planning of cities is to be a success it must make the betterment of housing conditions its first aim. There is a kind of city planning that causes bad housing conditions by lowering the cost of land development, a cost which at present is greatly in excess of what it need be, because no skilled intelligence is used in laying out the land used for building purposes. Hitherto it has been allowed to be filled up in any haphazard way that suits each individual operator in real estate, to be speculated in and boosted in value, to the detriment of the user and without real gain to anybody. The first necessity of good housing is to control all land development by town planning schemes.—American City.

CHILDREN AID CLEANUPS.

Philadelphia Public School Students Make War on Caterpillars.

One hundred and fifty thousand school children have been conducting a war against caterpillars in the city of Philadelphia. This army was called together by John P. Garber, superintendent of public schools. The warfare lasted a week, and the children were shown how to take the gray cottonlike cocoons from the trees. Caterpillars were killed with sharp sticks.



CHILDREN AT WORK ON A CLEANUP.

This caterpillar week is an excellent strategic move in saving the trees of the city.

Children all over the country have been giving good assistance in municipal cleanups. Interest in this excellent and public spirited work has been stimulated by schools and various associations, and the resulting effects have added much to the sanitariness of many municipalities.

"THE CITY WE HOPE TO SEE."

Good Work of the Boy Scouts In Many Municipalities.

[By Clinton Rogers Woodruff, secretary National Municipal league.]

We watch for the evils in city and streets—
look hard, look hard.
We fight for the city we hope to see—on
guard, on guard.
For a city that's happy and clean all
through
We pray for us all, but we fight for you.
There is nothing to get, there is something to do.
What, ho there; ho there, make way for
the city guard.
—Song of the Boston City Guards.

"We fight for the city we hope to see" is the keynote of endeavor. Too many in the past have waited for good conditions and efficient government to be handed to them on a silver salver. If we want improved conditions we must fight for them, just as we must fight for good character if we want it. Fight and pray! That is a good old slogan, but we must give it a new meaning. We must fight and pray for better things—not for glory merely or aggrandizement. These city guards have a hold on the right idea.

Speaking of the city guards brings to mind the boy scouts and the fact that their law requires that "a scout is clean. He keeps clean in body and thought, stands for clean speech, clean sport, clean habits and travels with a clean heart."

It is therefore logical and natural that we hear with constantly increasing frequency of the scouts taking an active part in local "clean up movements." From the New York headquarters we learn that the boy scouts of Beverly, Mass., picked up paper and rubbish from the streets; in New York they devoted several days to the general cleanup of the city; in Toledo, O., they proved helpful to the citizens' committee, which insisted on better sanitary conditions throughout the municipality; in Syracuse and Rochester, N. Y., the schools were halted one day while the scouts carried on a campaign of cleanliness; in Monongahela, Pa., the boy scouts went out on a crusade against tin cans; in Portland, Ore., they cleaned up the back yards, and in New Rochelle fifty scouts cleaned up the back lots. In Washington boy scouts have made a specialty of personal health and sanitation, and so the record goes. And the streets and towns are cleaner, and the boys are learning the lessons of personal responsibility and cooperative citizenship.

CROP ROTATION PAYS.

The value of crop rotation in maintaining soil fertility is shown by wheat yields at the Ohio experiment station at Wooster. Where unfertilized wheat has been grown continuously, year after year, it has yielded only seven and one-half bushels per acre as an average for twenty years. By growing the crop in a five year rotation of corn, oats, wheat, clover and timothy this yield has been increased 42 per cent. In a three year rotation of corn, wheat and clover a gain of 50 per cent in yield has been realized.

On manured land wheat in continuous culture has yielded less than eighteen bushels per acre. In the five year rotation it has given twenty-two bushels per acre where manure has been applied to this crop, and in the three year rotation, wheat following manured corn, the wheat, itself receiving no manure, has averaged twenty bushels per acre.

SEED IN THE MAKING.

When the Grain Is Field Dry It Should Be Stacked and Thrashed.

[Prepared by Minnesota station.]

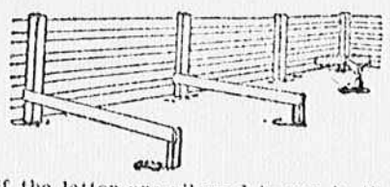
The very best time to get good seed is when it is in the making. Good seed is like good live stock—best when it comes of good ancestry and is produced under favorable conditions. So it is that some parts of the fields are better than others for the production of mature, well filled, sound seed, while other parts will produce a less valuable product. Looking over the various parts of the field before cutting, one may select the parts of the crop to be handled separately for the next year's seed supply. No extra work or "fussing" will be necessary before cutting. The field may be cut as a whole and shocked, but extra care is necessary in setting up shocks in the "seed" part of the field. A twelve bundle shock with two cap sheaves will withstand unfavorable weather and protect the grain.

As soon as the grain is field dry it should be stacked and thrashed. The seed grain should be put in a separate stack, and the cap sheaves should not be allowed in with the other parts of the shocks. They may go in with the feed or sale grain. When thrashed the seed grain should be stored separate from other grain, thus keeping it unmixed. When thus kept separate from field to bin it will be ready at any time for the last analysis—the fanning mill—before sowing.

It is not an easy matter always to judge the increased profit that comes from saving seed grain in this manner. Climate, soil and diseases have much to do with the apparent physical condition of the crop, but in the long run such saving of seed will give much stamina to the variety and increase its yielding capacity.

For Chicken-Eating Sows.

I see where some one wants to know how to cure hogs of eating chickens, says a contributor to the Farm Progress. By close attention to the problem I studied out a sure cure to keep them from getting the old hens. But the hogs will get the little chickens



If the latter are allowed to run in the pens. The illustration on this page gives the idea. First begin with a short board eight inches from the ground and then a board six feet long and the same distance from the ground, and so on around the pen. As the hog goes after the chicken it will slip under the board, and then when the hog starts for the other side of the board it slips under another one or under the same board. Then the hog will stand and look disgusted and finally go over and lie down.

Underground Silos.

Underground silos are advocated for semiarid districts by A. S. Neale, lecturer on dairy husbandry, division of extension, Kansas State Agricultural college.

"Farmers who have been using these silos for years are enthusiastic in sounding their praise," says Mr. Neale. "The first cost usually is not more than one-third of that of a good concrete, stave or steel silo, even where all labor is hired. Where the work is done by the regular farm help the cost is almost negligible, as there are slack times on most farms when silos can be made.

"Pit silos are easier to fill than the above ground type. They do not require the heavy machinery needed to fill the latter, and this naturally reduces expense."

Temperature is more uniform, lower in summer and higher in winter, points out Mr. Neale. The amount of spoilage is less.

Rust Prevention.

Most farm implements rust out before they wear out. Proper housing will offset rust and corrosion to a large extent, but in damp weather the best method of preventing rust is to coat all unpainted parts of the machinery with a heavy oil, thick enough so it will not run off. This coating keeps air and moisture away and prevents rust from starting.